

Chamber News

Castroville Area Chamber of Commerce

By Ashlee Tondre Bates

Chamber members Ken and Arlene Smith, owners of the Old Alsatian Steakhouse and Ristorante, are proud to announce the grand opening of their new private party area, the Arbor and Bistro Bar. With the great success of their restaurant, which opened in December of 2008, they are very excited to now open the lush grounds behind the restaurant which will serve as a party area. To celebrate this opening, they will be hosting their First Annual Summer Wine Tasting on Saturday June 13 at 5:30 p.m. and will feature Alsatian, French and Italian wines as well as hors d'oeuvres. Tickets for the event are just \$20 per person and can be purchased ahead of time at the restaurant. They will also feature live music by Meister & Meister and vendors specializing in handmade items for guests to purchase. Jonathan Fish of Castroville Pottery will also be on hand doing a live pottery demonstration. I was by the restaurant last week for dinner and stepped out on the back patio and boy was I impressed with all they had done. The beautiful grape arbor and 1800s smokehouse will surely make a beautiful background for your next event. For more information on the event or the Old Alsatian Steakhouse, please call (830) 931-9191.

I am not sure if you all know, but Castroville is a part of the Texas Hill Country Trail Region which is part of the Texas Heritage Trails Program. The trail program is based around 10 scenic driving trails created in 1968 by Gov. John Connally and the Texas Highway Department. In 1997, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) created the statewide heritage program which now serves as the backbone for their tourism initiative. This initiative encourages communities to promote Texas' historical and cultural resources. This increases visitation to these cultural and historical sites which in turn brings in dollars to Texas communities. I was recently asked to serve on the Board of Directors for the Region and it has been very enlightening visiting different cities in the Hill Country Region and finding out all about it. Most recently we met in Leakey, Texas, at the Real County Court House for our Board Meeting and were invited to the Burditt Ranch to watch a group of scientist band hummingbirds. It was one of the most amazing experiences I have had. I was able to catch hummingbirds and hand them over to have these tiny bands put on their leg, which enables the scientist to watch their migration patterns. Can you believe it, catching a hummingbird? I never in my life would have thought that was possible. There is truly so much the Hill Country has to offer! I would like to encourage you all to stop by the Chamber office and pick up a Texas Hill Country Trail map and visit one or if not all 19 counties in this region. Currently the Hill Country Trail Region is working with the THC to create a brochure on the region which should be out spring of 2010 and will feature Castroville as one of the places to visit!

I'm sure you've seen the signs all over town, but don't forget that this Saturday, June 6 is the City Wide Yard Sale. You don't need a permit to set up but if you want to be on the map, stop by Albros, the Barnyard Peddler, Ima's Antiques or Shirts N' Stuff to get signed up. It's just \$5 with proceeds going towards advertising and Castroville's Nip and Tuck, a low cost spay and neuter program. For more information, or to make a donation to Nip and Tuck, contact Kyle McVay at (830) 931-2525.

Vulcan Materials Company would like to invite everyone to a free mixer on Friday, June 12 at the Hondo Community Center at 1014 18th Street. The mixer begins at 5:30 p.m. and they will have refreshments for all to enjoy. For more information, contact Cynthia at (830) 426-5344.

Don't forget about Fiorella Friday this weekend. It's been over three years since this event got started and it keeps going strong. Come celebrate with artisans, wine tastings and live music. Saturday, it's off to the Farmer's Market for fresh fruits and veggies in front of Alsace Hair, Nails and Tanning. See you at the Yard Sale!